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JOURNAL OF THE  
**BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY**

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VOLUME 10, #3

FALL 2000



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## BCCS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I write this message in mid September prior to leaving for a trip to Australia. (I'll let everyone know what I find there of numismatic interest).

The 1999 Chicago ANA was as great a convention as any I've attended. My activities and pursuits were a bit different due to my responsibility as Education Chair and for the Numismatic Theater. Essentially, this meant more focus on one facet and less general looking and talking to collectors. Our convention meeting was a place to meet new Barber enthusiasts and renew old friendships. We added nearly a half dozen new or tardy re-upping members. Steve Szczerbiak was in attendance and offering to bring order, and add interest to Barber varieties. I invite members who just have noticed something different on a coin to contact Steve. He'll share his knowledge and let you know what you actually have. This interaction may be complete at this point or extend to a note in the Journal featuring your coin.

As reported in the last issue, the Heritage ANA Signature Sale offered a Barber dime, cataloged as 1909-O/over inverted D. For the record, the photo in the last issue didn't clearly show the under mintmark. My personal examination indicated the invert D was very obvious and distinct. The coin was a cleaned Fine was believed worth \$200 to \$300. Several Barber enthusiasts were interested and some were bidding on the lot. The coin opened at \$300 and was contested by two bidders in the room. The buyer took the coin at a hammer price of \$650 (+15% buyers fee for a selling price of \$747.50); I was the underbidder. I introduced myself to the buyer, Ron Brown of Louisiana who is a friendly collector and graciously attended the Barber meeting on Saturday, Ron collects coins minted at New Orleans, thus the interest in this coin.

While coins, Barbers particularly, bring us together, I've written frequently about the positive aspects of large shows and the ANA convention. I believe the key element one finds there is meeting fellow collectors (and dealers). Over ten years ago, I attended my first ANA and met a dealer who I have grown to know and consider a valued friend. This person is Dave Lawrence. Allow me to share the following thought I wrote to Paul Reuter a few weeks ago:

I spent this weekend with Dave and his wife Lynn. ALS is a relentless progressive disease. Dave's humor and wit are still there which is good to see. He is not able to stand and it is very difficult to hear and understand his speech. He has a 7-day caregiver (Matt 'the giant' or Paul, each great guys), physical aids (a person-to-person microphone or a Dave-to-room speaker) and a neat 'no hands' computer. However, all these fall short of the 'natural' processes. I'd like to write something about Dave in the next journal but question if I should. As you likely note, John is blazing new frontiers with the business as was most evident with ANA.

*continued on page 13*



## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the fall journal. Your editor has been busy searching through the Vermont State Archives and Historical Society for information for articles I have been working on. Some of these will appear in future, Bowers and Merena's, *Rare Coin Reviews*, and *The Colonial Coin Collectors Club Newsletter* the latter which I co-edit. Speaking of the *Rare Coin Review*, the last issue, July-August 1999 contains some interesting information concerning the first days of striking coins at the Denver mint. Barber collectors will be interested in learning that the first specimen of a 1906-D dime was struck February 27, 1906. The first 1906-D quarter struck was on February 15, 1906, while the first half for 1906-D was struck March 2, 1906. The first Liberty five-cent coin, the 1912-D was struck February 5, 1912. Many other coins are listed as well, so if you don't get this fine publication call Bowers & Merena at 800-222-5993 and start your subscription today! Those interested in the *Colonial Collectors Club* should contact, Angel Pietri, 1560 Manchester Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33919, dues are \$20.

Our Secretary/Treasurer tells me Paul Gilkes interesting article on Barber coins in the Sept. 13th *Coin World*, brought many letters of interest in our society. New members are always welcome should you know any collectors who enjoy Barber coins. A membership is also a great gift for the holidays.

Recent letters to your editor, describing your Barber coin finds are a thrill to read and many will appear in the pages of future journals. A special thanks to all who sent articles, as it sure helps your editor put together each journal. Steven Jones sent me some wonderful photos of a 1900 half dollar with numerous die breaks around the obverse and reverse. I am doing a study on Barber half die breaks and hope to have the article ready for the next journal. If you have any photo's of Barber half die breaks, or any other interesting Barber photo's for that matter, please send them along to me. Notice the deadline for the next journal, JANUARY 15th. I have moved this back about 15 days because of the busy holiday season. The winter journal will also be your last chance for your article to win the literary contest. Members will be voting in the spring journal for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners, so please keep sending me your articles.

I will be vacationing for a few days this fall, as well as attending the annual fall Burlington Vermont coin show, so I hope to have some interesting finds to report in the next journal.

Enjoy Collecting  
Russell Easterbrooks







## MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER

One of the things the Secretary/Treasurer of the Society does is to maintain the inventory of back issues of the Journal. Sending out sample copies to prospective members is one way of attracting new members and of course selling back issues to current members is a moderate source of revenue for the Society. Keeping track of these back issues should not be a problem but the issue are now reading is the 39th Journal issued by the Society. I am sorry to admit that after a while the back issues became a bit disorganized in my storeroom and a straightening out was in order. To my surprise I found a few copies that I didn't know I had.

Previously several issues were no longer considered to be in print and only available as copy machine copies. I now have available the following hard to get issues: two copies of vol.2 #1, one copy of vol.2 #2, two copies of vol.5 #1 and one copy of vol.5 #2. These are for sale at the usual price of \$3.00 per copy and will go to the first persons calling me. I suggest calling to reserve your copy rather than just sending a check.

The above mentioned issues are the only issues on the endangered species list, all other issues are in plentiful supply. Several new members have inquired about buying the whole array of back issues and because of bulk mailing, a discounted price is available. Again a note or a call ahead of time is recommended.

New members may wish to buy back issues but may have some specific areas of interest. For this purpose, vol.7 #2 may be of value to them. This is an index issue containing a comprehensive index of the contents of the first 25 issues of the Journal. The price for this issue is the same as all other issues, \$3.00.

And one final note, please send me any changes of addresses that occur so that you can keep getting your Journals on a timely basis.

Paul Reuter  
415 Ellen Drive  
Brookhaven, Ms 39601  
601-833-5308  
preuter@tislink.com



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Period Ending September 30, 1999

Opening balance January 1, 1999	\$4,683.81
Income:	
Dues	\$3,615.00
Advertising	1,200.00
Back Issue sales	149.00
Donation	15.00
Misc.	1.50
	<u>4,980.50</u>
Funds available	\$9,664.31
Expenses:	
Journal production	\$3,587.72
Misc. postage	96.93
ANA dues	33.00
Misc.	5.44
	<u>\$3,723.09</u>
Balance September 30, 1999	\$ 5,941.22

Paul Reuter  
Secretary/Treasurer

### THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Remember your articles submissions automatically enter you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50, second prize will be \$25, and third place will be a free BCCS one year membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date, and get your article in the mail to Russell at the address on page one.

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS JANUARY 15th**

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## Barber Country

*by Jack White*

On my recent summer vacation to up state New York, near the Vermont border, I enjoyed many quiet country rides. As I drove through many small towns the architecture caught my eye. Many of the buildings were constructed around a century ago at the height of the Barber coin era. Some buildings even had the date of construction on them, usually in wood. These displaying the dates were particularly interesting as many were made of brick, I assume as protection against fire. As a baseball fan I know that the first modern major league stadiums built circa 1910 were constructed of steel and concrete, with brick as well. These materials were less combustible of course than wood. Many of these buildings I saw contained thrift and antique shops.

My track record of finding coins in antique shops is quite dismal. However the thrill of the hunt is half the fun! I began my day by stopping at a deli for a quick sandwich in an old brick edifice with the 1911 date high above the entrance. The date 1911 was an omen of my day to come. I thought of the Barbers coins which were exchanged in trade inside during a busy business day. After lunch I stopped at a flea market located on an old fairgrounds opened in 1904. I thought of the countless number of Barber dimes in particular which must have been lost on the grassy fairgrounds, now mostly cover with blacktop. I saw a few coin dealers with limited supplies of low grade Barber material, none of which I purchased. An hour and a half of searching produced an original 1902 AU quarter with light toning that I purchased at a nice price.

The next town I came to made my day. It had a bank which was located in a brick building constructed in 1892, the initial year of silver Barber coinage. Inside I inquired of the availability of any half dollars which they might have. I met with no success with this, however the teller spoke of an antique shop down the street. The antique mart was housed in an old brick building probably built during the Barber era. Inside was a fairly large case which displayed various coins with a pleasant older woman behind it. There were many nice Barber pieces, particularly quarters. They were in higher circulated grades than normally seen, mostly F to VF. Most appeared dark as well. The woman explained that many were found by her husband with a metal detector over twenty years ago. There was a limited supply of available dates, which surprised me. There were no Barber halves which was not a real surprise. I know from owning a metal detector that half dollars of any type are very elusive. There were many quarters dated 1902-1912, but only one prior to 1898. Most were from the Philadelphia mint, without a single example from the New Orleans mint. Better date pieces included, 1907-S, 1911-D, and 1913-D. I purchased eighteen Barber quarters and twelve Barber



dimes. Roughly 90% of these graded F to VF. The prize was the 1911-D quarter which graded a nice XF. Most coins cleaned up nicely after the surface dirt was removed with a coin cleaner and preservative. The price for the lot was very reasonable.

Don't over look out of the way places for coins. If you have the time and patience to explore you never know what your reward will be. The hunt itself is enjoyable even if the success rate is rather low.



### FOR SALE

27 Liberty nickels, half are VG or better, Trends about \$41.00 - sell for \$20.00. Also large group of Buffaloes VG to AU at half Trends. Write for list. Paul Reuter, 415 Ellen Drive, Brookhaven, Ms 39601

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## Common Date Barber Dime ERRORS???

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*by Lindsay Ashburn*

Many (maybe most) coin collectors build their collections without ever seeing a Barber error coin. They are admittedly scarce, and definitely a specialized corner of the hobby. I saw my first one a few years ago in a PA mailbid catalog, quite by accident. At that time, I was fairly new to collecting but had decided half-heartedly to work on a Fine Barber dime set, starting with the easy ones. I was intrigued by the notion of this off-center Barber dime. I had no idea of its value, but placed my bid according to the table in the back of the redbook. I won the coin, a 20% off-center 1902x (no mintmark area) in F-VF for \$80. Not knowing whether I had been taken, or whether I had gotten a good deal, I set out to learn more about these oddities.

A handful of years later, I now know that Barber errors follow a few simple rules:

- Barber quarter and half errors are exponentially more scarce than Barber dime errors.
- The errors prior to 1900 are extremely tough to locate. Those in existence have found homes in serious collections and rarely surface. (I have located NONE in 5 years).
- The 20th Century specimens are more available, with those from the teens being most common.
- Slightly off-center errors are much more common than those farther off-center (This makes sense because those coins 20% or more off-center are oddly shaped, and thus more easily detected before leaving the mint).
- The asking price often seems to be based on whim, with no relation to grade or magnitude of the error.
- The asking price has definitely trended upward recently. (I suspect that PCGS' decision to begin slabbing errors has played a role and will keep this trend alive for quite some time. This possible correlation was pointed out to me by an error collector from Ohio).

I have spent the past five years looking for Barber dime errors at the local NC and southern VA shows, at the FUN show each January, in the hobby publications, and in large numismatic auction catalogs. I have also scoured the internet for the last two years. This is where I have located the largest portion of my error collection. I have established some friendly and dependable numismatic contacts through the [rec.collecting.coins](http://rec.collecting.coins) newsgroup.

As I found these error coins, I bought them all except those that were, in my opinion, over-priced and those where I was outbid. My collection formed during this period shows that 1916-S is by far the most common date for off-center



strikes. I have purchased over 20 broadstrikes and off-centers, with 7 of them being 1916-S!! Of the 10 or so I missed, at least three of these were 1916-S as well.

Is there such a thing as a common date off-center Barber dime? When one third of those on the market are of the same date, my answer is YES. I would like BCCS members' opinions on what caused the quality problem in San Francisco that year. It may be worth mentioning that I have not found any 1916-S Mercury dime errors during this period, despite a mintage almost twice as high as 1916-S Barber dimes.



**1916-S Barber Dime MS 63**  
Struck approximately 20% off center. Superbly toned. The date is virtually complete. While slightly off-center, Barber dimes are sometimes seen; pieces as significant as this example are very rare.



*Photographs courtesy of Bowers and Merena.*

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## Online Barbers

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*by Lindsay Ashburn*

The computer age, despite its drawbacks and uncertainties (can you say Y2K?), has put almost endless resources at the fingertips of the coin collector.

Collectors have Online access to auction catalogs from many of the largest and most prestigious numismatic auction firms in the world. Heritage, Stacks, Superior, Bowers and Merena and others have catalogs and inventory available via the internet. Being able to browse and buy or bid at one's own leisure and discretion is likely to be very popular for years to come. If you have ever paid \$10 or more for one of these catalogs, you can appreciate browsing them online for free.

MANY small coin dealers and dealer/collectors also have inventory available online. There is a leap of faith when buying from some dealer you only discovered on your computer a few minutes ago. It is not unlike buying for the first time from a printed ad in one of the hobby newspapers. Much like the mail-order scene, there are those exemplary online dealers we love to find, and those rip-off artists that inevitably make life harder for collectors and other dealers. There are online coin clubs that bring together dealers and collectors from all areas of numismatics. These clubs allow global access to other collectors and dealers that share collecting interests.

There is a newsgroup, [rec.collecting.coins](mailto:rec.collecting.coins), devoted specifically to coin collecting topics. This is an area where discussions are held, questions are asked and answered, current events are kicked around. Collectors share good and bad experiences with various dealers. For Auction, For Sale, and Wanted to Buy items are also posted here, but to a limited degree. The atmosphere there is informal, and anyone can join in. Some very reputable numismatists help to answer questions there. I was impressed when I received a personal e-mail response from J.T. Stanton regarding a particular barber dime question I had.

There are several online auctions, most offering some amount of coins. Most of these online auction sites have low seller fees and no buyer fees, attractive to buyers and sellers. The largest online auction is [www.eBay.com](http://www.eBay.com), with about 25-30,000 US coin auctions running at any given time. With some 600,000,000 'hits' per month, eBay has enough potential bidders to please almost any seller with quality merchandise.

There are web sites that provide information on practically any numismatic topic you can imagine. Generally, the only cost to you is the amount of time you spend hunting for the information. Search engines will find what you want in seconds, if you just type in a key word or two.

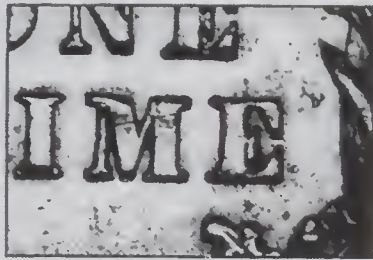
*continued on page 13*



# Barber Dime Varieties

by Russell Easterbrooks

Except for perhaps Max Mehl, most early auction catalogers show very little attention to Barber varieties. Mehl always seemed to take special pride in describing all the coins represented in his catalogs. These early coin descriptions are valuable to today's collectors looking for interesting varieties.



1914-P 10c  
BROKEN MIDDLE SERIF OF "E" IN THE WORD  
"DIME".  
(COIN COURTESY OF RUSSELL EASTERBROOKS)

Mehl's auction of the Samuel McVitty collection in 1938 contained a 1916 Barber dime Mehl described as the "broken E in Dime variety." He went on to say this die break was very scarce. When I began looking for this I found what I believe Mehl was describing. The broken E appears as a blob of metal between the middle and lower sections of the E in the word DIME. This die break varies slightly in size and surprisingly is found on many different dates! These dates include the 1909-P, O, D & S, 10-D & S, 11-P, D & S, 12-P, 14-P, 16-P & S. To date I have not observed this die break occurring prior to 1909.

This may indicate a minor design change that has created a weak area which allows this break to occur. The broken E appears to be most common on the 1909-S, as I have yet to see a coin of this date that does not show this break!

While corresponding with our treasurer, Paul Reuter, he verified that his collection contained some of the aforementioned dates with this die break, most notably the 1909-S. Paul also wondered why this break does not seem to occur in the identical E in the word ONE. It appears the broken E is quite common and surely could be considered the most common die break seen on later date Barber dimes.

Other Mehl catalogs I have seen describe such Barber dime varieties as a "1912 without reeding on the edge" and a 1911-D with a grease-filled die, not allowing the I in DIME to be seen.

Most recently, my brother located an interesting 1914 dime with a grease filled die. This coin only shows the last three letters in the word AMERICA (see photo Fall, '96 journal). The amount of design obliterated by grease is the greatest I have ever seen. The coin was found in an antique shop among some coins in a small case.



1914-P 10c  
WEAKLY STRUCK "AMER".  
SAME COIN PICTURED HERE TO  
THE LEFT.

*continued on next page*

## Barber Dime Varieties

*continued from last page*

The Barber Society has elevated the awareness of today's Barber collectors to include interesting varieties that previously had gone unnoticed. Future collectors will use our journal as a valuable reference tool to enhance their collecting interests. I urge all of you to be a part of this effort and write an article and leave some of your collecting interest to history.



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Presidents Message

continued from page 2

I sent this message to Dave and he was OK in my sharing the above with our members. If you want to send him an Email, the address is [dlrc@concentric.net]. Treasure friendships and take nothing for less than its worth.

Numismatic regards,  
Phil Carrigan

BCCS ADVERTISEMENT RATES

1/8 page	1 issue .....	\$12	4 issues .....	\$40
1/4 page	1 issue .....	\$20	4 issues .....	\$70
1/2 page	1 issue .....	\$30	4 issues .....	\$100
1 page	1 issue .....	\$70	4 issues .....	\$250
<hr/>				
1 page inside front or rear cover	1 issue ...	\$80	4 issues .....	\$300
1 page outside rear cover	1 issue ...	\$125	4 issues .....	\$400

Online Barbers

continued from page 10

This leads me to my reason for writing this article. Wanting to share my pleasure of collecting barber dime errors and varieties, I decided to set up a webpage. There is nothing for sale there, but there are lots of neat pictures of barber dime errors and varieties, and lots of educational information for the new collector. The page is eternally under construction, I suppose, because I add more stuff to the site when I get new stuff and find time. The site also shows some interesting barber dimes provided to me by other collectors.

Visit me sometime at: <http://geocities.com/eureka/concourse/4920/index.htm> or you can find me with many search engines using the keywords "barber dime errors".

# Mint Production Mishaps

by Russell Easterbrooks



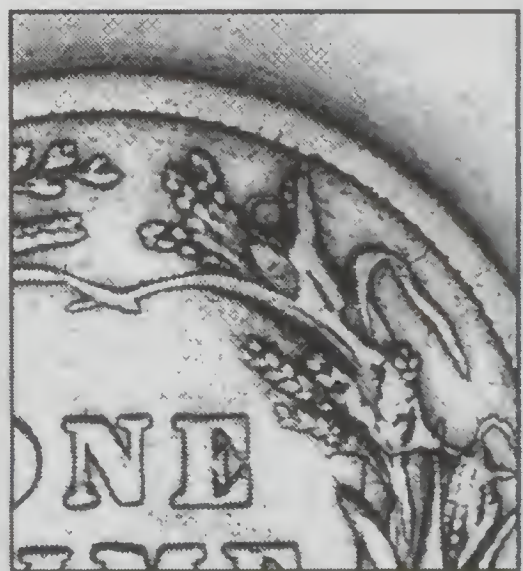
**1899-P 10¢ DIE CRACKS & CHIPS**  
CRACK AT 11:00; CHIP AT 1:00  
(COIN COURTESY OF LINDSAY ASHBURN)

The methods used to strike this country's coinage has certainly advanced over the years. Yet even today mishaps accrue during the production process that can effect the appearance of our coins. Cracked dies are one such occurrence that leaves a tell tail sign visible on a coin's surface. First appearing as a hair like line of raised metal, die cracks can deteriorate to the point where a blob or droplet of raised metal will appear. If not discovered by mint personnel, the die will continue to disintegrate

causing large areas of metal, known as cuds to obliterate parts of the coin's design.

Among Barber coins, cuds are quite rare, yet lessor die cracks are far more common. The reverse of the Barber dime emerges as the most prevalent hunting ground for die cracks, while Barber Halves seem to have the fewest. The dime reverse also has the most diverse variety, including some of the ones pictured below. The life of a die varies with the metal and size of the coin it is to strike. All the dies (during the Barber era) were made at the Philadelphia Mint, and average nearly seventeen hundred dies per year including, various commemorative and metal dies.

Barber's engraving process begins by making a model of the design in wax about three or four times the size of the finished coin. An electrotype is made of the model which is then attached to the reducing lathe. This wonderful machine cost the mint nearly \$10,000.00 during Barber's tenure. This lathe makes a reproduction of the electrotype, only smaller on the prepared metal surface which becomes the hub. This hub



**1905-O 10¢ DIE BREAKS**  
TOP OF CORN AT 3:00 INWARD  
ALSO ON RIM AT 1:00  
(LINDSAY ASHBURN)



is then used to strike a master die used to make the many dies needed for coining. This description is some what summarized, not reveling the countless hardening and softening to the steel in the process, as well as countless other procedures.

The working dies are put to work in the striking presses, which generate great pressure on the dies, often approaching 80 tons for the Barber dime issues. This striking pressure takes its toll on the hardened steel die, causing cracks to appear.



1897-P



1896-S

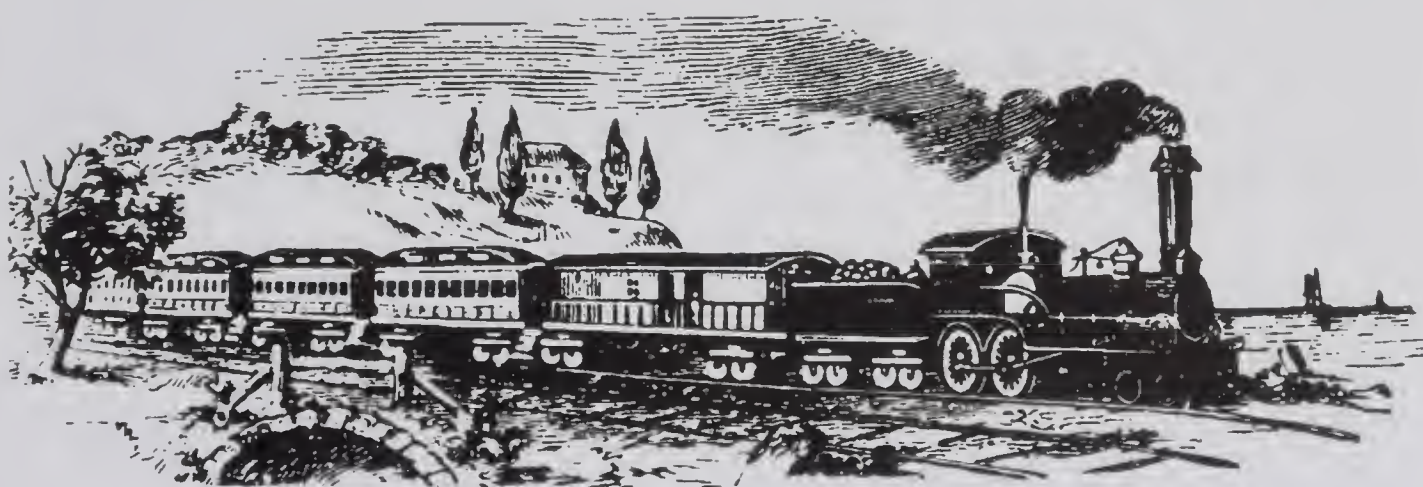


1892-P

These cracks then will be seen on the finished coin as the before mentioned hair like lines of raised metal.

The branch mints received their coining dies from the Philadelphia mint with the mint mark already affixed to the die. Because only a limited number of dies were sent to the branch mints, if a die crack was spotted by mint personal, the die was often allowed to continue whereby new cracks would appear, or the original crack would continue to deteriorate. This explains the many New Orleans mint marked dimes I've seen with many different die cracks. I have one dime in particular which displays seven different cracks on it's reverse!

These many procedures all impact the out come of the finished coin. To the collector these various mishaps create a die *signature*, allowing researchers a trail leading to a better understanding of these intersting varieties.



## A Neat Barber Half Dollar

*by Michael Fey*



This is to report a neat 1908 Barber half with an almost perfect 90 degree clockwise rotated reverse.

I've been scratching my head on this one and been asking around if anyone has ever come across a Barber half with an almost perfect 90 degree rotation. Please refer to Photo 1 (obverse) and Photo 2 (reverse) taken by Bill Fivaz. What a spectacular looking piece! Any more or less of a rotation and it would not look as spectacular. Surely there are other 1908's like this one, and

perhaps other Barber coinage with rotated reverses.

So, enjoy the excuse to take another look at your coins and drop me a note with any Barber rotated reverses you may have. If there's enough interest and data, I'll prepare a follow-up in a future BCCS Journal and share the information. Happy hunting!

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